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Characteristics and performance of Donovan Scholars (56 men and 127 women over 65) in the Educare Program at the University of Kentucky were studied, and pertinent research problems were revealed. Findings include the following: (1) most Scholars were high school graduates with at least some college; (2) most grades were fair to excellent; (3) English, art, history, education, and philosophy were the most popular courses; (4) Donovans were comparable to regular students on five personality measures and significantly different on eight others; (5) Donovan Scholars were more conforming and conservative than younger students, with much more commitment to religious values; (6) on the whole, they were very well accepted by professors. Analytical projects are under way on self-administered testing, student evaluation by professors, morale and involvement, medical testing, mental competency, and driver retraining. (Included are 18 references and 15 tables and charts.) (ly)

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THE OLDER ADULT AS A UNIVERSITY STUDENT

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THE OLDER ADULT AS A UNIVERSITY STUDENT

EARL KAUFFMAN, Ed. D.

A B S T R A C T

The purpose of this paper is to enlarge the concept of adult education to include people, who, because they are retired, pursue learning experiences for reasons of their own which are not necessarily those that traditionally generate the rationale for adult education. Consequently, new problems are created in the areas of administration and programming which require examination. The entrance of older persons into adult education furnishes opportunities for research which are not only age-related but may also be relevant to a better understanding of the total spectrum of the learning process.

Earl Kauffman is director of the Council on Aging, University of Kentucky, Lexington. This paper was prepared for the Tenth International Seminar on Adult Education Research, Toronto, Canada, February 9-11, 1969.

11 INTRODUCTION

Older adults, the Ss of this paper, are Donovan Scholars in the Educare Program at the University of Kentucky. As such they are recipients of the Herman L. Donovan Senior Citizens Fellowship which provides that any person over 65, regardless of place of residence or previous educational attainments, can matriculate in the University of Kentucky without the payment of fees. (They do pay their own living expenses.) The only prerequisites are:

1. An intense desire to learn and,
2. A level of mental and physical health sufficient to permit active participation in academic life.

Donovan Scholars may enroll in any courses listed in the General Catalog. They may audit classes or work for credit and earn degrees. Generally they attend classes along with the regular students who often are young enough to be their grandchildren. The only special is Art, for which the demand exceeds the capacity of classes offered by the Department of Fine Arts. They take part in many campus activities, are serviced by the Student Health Center, and receive complimentary parking permits.

Educare was officially adopted as a program of the University by the Board of Trustees in 1964. It is administered by the Council on Aging, a division of University Extension.

The concept of Educare was first proposed by the late President-emeritus Herman L. Donovan in a paper written for the White House Conference on Aging in 1961. He had become interested in what older people did with their time as he prepared for his own retirement. While attending the Institute on Gerontology at the University of Michigan he became convinced that education was a life-long process and that institutions of higher education had a responsibility for providing opportunities for learning as long as life itself continues. He suggested that colleges and universities could partially repay their debt of gratitude for the life-long support of older adults by opening the gates of campuses so those who wished to learn could do so without the encumbrance of fees and tuition.

At first the task of the Council staff was administrative: promotion, registration, housing, and university-wide orientation. Now, in the fifth year of operation, the emphasis is expanding to include research and experimentation.

The task of this paper is not to recapitulate the Educare Program--certain parameters are summarized in the Appendix--but to identify some

problems for research which experience with it have revealed. It is hoped that this may lead to a dialogue which will contribute to experimentation with the Educare concept in many institutions of higher education.

III THEORY

It should be obvious to scientists and educators that adult education stands on the threshold of immense change and breath-taking new responsibilities. There have been remarkable gains in both numbers and ratios of older people in the total population.[6] In 1890, when the population of the United States was 62.6 million there were 2.4 million, or 3.9 per cent, 65 and older. In 1963, out of a population of 185.4 million, 17.5 million, were 65 or older. Percentage-wise the projected gain is slowing down but in the aggregate there will be approximately 24.0 million, roughly 10 per cent, in this age group by 1975. Canadians who are 65 plus increased from 1.4 million to 1.5 between 1961 and 1967. This represents a 10.7 increase. Women out gained men by 14.8 per cent as compared to 6.3 per cent.[17]

People already well into their mature years are experiencing a lengthening of the life span.[1] White males who were age 50 in

1900 could expect to live 19.7 years; in 1967 the expectancy had risen to 23.2. For white women the gain was greater: from 21.89 to 28.5. Non-whites had similar gains: for men from 17.34 to 21.0; for women 18.67 to 25.0. Although these gains do not seem to be spectacular they are linear with no evidence of decline. Other age-related changes of significance to adult educators have been listed by Kreps,[11] who notes that males in industrial societies have eight more years of work-life expectancy, and an additional eight years of non-working expectancy, than their country cousins. And most recently the spectacular success of Drs. Merrifield, Gutte, Denewalter, and Hirschmann in synthesizing the enzyme Ribonuclease[18] may well be a long step toward manipulating the RNA which some scientists believe to be the programming mechanism for both the quality and length of life.

In addition to the demographers and bioscientists the sociologists have contributions to make to the emergence of a theory of adult education which comprehends Educare. Carp[1] points out, "For the first time in history, significant numbers of people have completed their work well before the end of their life span" and she asks, "How does a whole society replace work as the major source of meaningful life?"[2] If society has rejected its non-producing workers because

of age then there must be institutions created to absorb them into the mainstream of life. The alternative is disengagement, a theory of aging propounded by Cumming and Henry.[5] A positive approach to the fullness of life in retirement in which adult education can become a prime mover is the development of an aging subculture.[14] The outlines for this are presented by Rose and Peterson who suggest that two related factors have special value in conferring status within such a social structure. Both of these are basic to Educare. They are: 1. Physical and Mental Health, and 2. Social Activity. Perhaps adult education is one form of the re-creative experiences of which Colley[4] speaks as she seeks to achieve the ego-stage development as outlined by Erickson.[7]

Basic to the theory of Educare is the belief that it must be integrated into the general conceptual framework of adult education. In their three-level system: family education, sequential-unit, and complimentary-functional Essert and Spence[8] offer support to providing learning opportunities for older adults while at the same time challenging adult educators to concerning themselves with what goes on here. They say, "Adult education directed toward more mature receptivity to change has not yet been a major concern of either research or practice."

In this context, there may be considerable significance in the observation that the educational level of our population is increasing. In 1950 only 25 per cent of the people ever had more than an eighth grade education; in 1964, there were 33 per cent who had achieved this level.[9]

An additional variable which must be mentioned in weaving a theory of adult education for older adults is that of their economic status. In looking forward to 1980 Schulz[16] was able to bring some encouragement to the economic viability of the aged group. He projected that their position in terms of both income from pensions and net worth in terms of assets would slowly improve, but that by then as many as 35 per cent of couples would have income under $3,000 and 17 per cent of single people would have less than $2,000. Other old people, while somewhat better off, will still be hard pressed to finance education regardless of their desire to do so. Educare provides free tuition.

IV RESEARCH

The major hypothesis of Educare contends that high morale in later life is achieved through voluntary involvement intellectually, socially, and physically in experiences which are meaningful to the participants. This is supported by Kutner[12] in his study of

Five Hundred over Sixty; Hamlin in his Utility Theory of Old Age,[10] and, from a practitioner's point of view, by Carp in describing life in Victorian Plaza.[3]

To date most of the research in Educare has been operational in character: who, what, when, why, and how. Data on each of these are presented in the appendix to this paper.

Several analytical projects are under way which may be interesting to adult educators.

1. Since many people from far away places are interested in the program, we are seeking a self-administered test which can help the applicant judge his own abilities to succeed as a Donovan Scholar. We have not yet found this instrument.

2. We systematically collect evaluations of the Donovan Scholars by their professors and vice versa. Now we are seeking to assay attitudes of young students toward the Donovans. This project has taken an added significance since the older students are being accepted in the dormitories as well as classrooms.

3. Several efforts are under way to test the basic hypothesis that morale is correlated with involvement. The Rotter Incomplete Sentence[15] instrument and the Omnibus Personality Inventory (OPI)[13] have been used. The University Testing and Counselling Bureau are cooperating in this project.

4. The University Medical Center has initiated but not implemented several tests. One had to do with pulmonary efficiency, and the other with the effect of a common vegetable upon the urinary system.

5. It may be that the senility syndrome will become a problem in Educare programs. Both the Comprehensive Mental Health Center and the Medical Center have been alerted to the need for practical measures of competency. Personal counselling is provided but no testing program has emerged. To date, only one person has withdrawn for this reason.

6. Many Donovan Scholars drive their own cars. The only "we hope to do it" research reported here is driver re-training by the use of traffic simulators.

We have purposely delayed engaging in the wide useage of tests because of the sensitivity of older adults toward: a. invasion of privacy, b. apparently irrelevant questions and procedures, and c. overwhelming paper work. However, no Donovan Scholar has categorically refused to provide the information required. In fact, once they have a test they are most anxious to learn their scores.

V CONCLUSIONS

In four years a total of 183 men and women above 65 have been awarded Donovan Fellowships. Of these 56 were men and 127 were women. Their ages at date of entry: the age range was from 65 to 86, with a mean of 69.99. In this interval there were five deaths. The Donovans came from 20 states, with 149 from Kentucky. They represent 44 occupations, with most having been teachers, secretaries, and homemakers. Their educational backgrounds ranged from grade school-4, to Ph.D.-4. Of 117 complete records 6 had some high school, 21 were high school graduates, 30 had some college, 20 an AB or BS, 11 had completed some graduate work, and 20 had earned a Master's Degree. Of those accepting the Fellowship only nine dropped out in their first semester; 47 have completed one semester and one has been in the program for all 12 semesters, including summer school. They have earned a total of 55 A's, 84 B's, 42 C's, 21 D's, 25 E's, 5 I's. Thirty-four dropped the courses they registered for and 214 courses were audited. The subjects ranged from A (Art) to Z (Zoology) with the most popular being English, 82' Art, 74; History, 57; Education, 53, and Philosophy, 25. One Donovan is studying Japanese, one Computer Science, and 19 Library Science.

Donovan Scholars do not differ significantly from regular students in their adjustment to life, as measured by the Rotter Incomplete Sentence Blank. The mean for Donovan men being 117, for the well-adjusted regular freshman, 119; for women the means are 122.96 for Donovan women and 121 for the well-adjusted college girl. More specific personality comparisons, as measured by the Omnibus Personality Inventory reveal similarities on four scales: Thinking Introversion, 35.0 vs 34.8; Estheticism, 11.7 vs 11.5; Masculinity-Feminity, 50.6 vs 50.0; and Social Introversion, 22.7 vs 20.7. The scales reveal a remarkable sharing of intellectual and esthetic interests. Donovans are less interested than their young classmates in the scientific method and ambiguous propositions; they prefer structured and logical interpretations. Their feelings of social competence do compare favorably, however.

Significant differences between the Donovans and college freshmen on eight scales: Theoretical Orientation, 16.6 vs 18.8; Complexity, 8.9 vs 11.7; Autonomy, 15.8 vs 22.8; Impulse Expression, 17.4 vs 31.8; Schizoid Functioning, 25.1 vs 31.3; Religious Liberalism, 8.4 vs 14.6; Lack of Anxiety, 14.5 vs 12.0; Couch-Kenniston, 6.8 vs 8.7. To compare, Donovans are more conforming and conservative with

considerable more commitment to religious values than shown by the average college freshman.

In terms of acceptance by professors Donovan Scholars rate extremely well. Out of 183 evaluations by 113 professors 148 stated categorically their acceptance of the students. Fifteen accepted with no comment, and 13 requested that five particular students not be enrolled with them again. No one rejected this program in toto.

VI SUMMARY

This paper purported at the outset to enlarge the concept of adult education to include retired people. Reference was made to some of the research continuously under way, and an Appendix is attached which summarizes the findings to date. Finally, several important areas of research have been identified. It is proposed that adult educators consider the installation of Educare-type programs in their institutions and that they look to the older scholars as a fruitful field for research.

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VI S U M M A R Y

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THE OLDER ADULT AS A UNIVERSITY STUDENT

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TABLE I

AGE AT TIME OF ENROLLMENT

Total 183 Mean 69.99

AGE	NUMBER	PER CENT	AGE	NUMBER	PER CENT
65	29	15.8	76	8	4.3
66	20	12.0	77	4	2.1
67	16	8.6	78	3	1.5
68	14	7.6	79	1	.05
69	18	9.7	80	3	1.5
70	15	8.1	81	1	.05
71	13	7.1	82	0	---
72	7	3.8	83	1	.05
73	6	3.2	84	3	1.5
74	8	4.3	85	0	---
75	4	2.1	86	1	.05

No Report 8 - 4.3 per cent

TABLE II

SEX AND MARITAL STATUS

STATUS	MALE	PER CENT	FEMALE	PER CENT
Married, living with spouse	25	73.5	16	20.5
Married, spouse deceased	7	20.6	36	46.1
Divorced	1	2.95	2	2.6
Single	1	2.95	24	30.8
Totals	34	100.00	78	100.00

N = 112

TABLE III

PLACE OF RESIDENCE AT ENTRY

PLACE	NUMBER	PLACE	NUMBER
Kentucky	149	Indiana	1
Illinois	8	Kansas	1
New York	5	Georgia	1
Pennsylvania	2	Colorado	1
Minnesota	2	Ohio	1
California	1	Missouri	2
Michigan	1	Arkansas	1
Alabama	1	New Jersey	1
South Carolina	1	Washington	1
Texas	1	Maryland	1
		Shanghi, China	1

N = 183

TABLE IV

PRINCIPAL LIFE-TIME OCCUPATIONS

OCCUPATION	NUMBER	OCCUPATION	NUMBER
Teaching	50	Military	1
Housewife	19	Editor	1
Secretary	18	YMCA Executive	1
Engineer	10	Telephone Operator	1
Social Worker	7	Placement Officer	1
Accountant	7	Extension Specialist	1
Farm Manager	4	Flight Instructor (Female)	1
Chemist	3	Judge	1
Receptionist	3	Designer	1
Librarian	3	Book Repair	1
Red Cross	3	Private Work	1
Nurse	3	Lab. Technician	1
Salesman	3	Teamster	1
Minister	2	Civil Service	1
Professional Dancer	1	Doctor	1
Business Executive	2	Seed Analyst	1
Reporter	1	University Registrar	1
Watch Maker	1		
Guidance Counselor	1		
Landscape Architect	1		

Some Donovan Scholars listed more than one occupation

TABLE V

EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUNDS

STATUS	NUMBER	PER CENT
Elementary School only	4	3.4
Some High School	6	5.1
High School only	21	18.8
Some College	30	25.6
Baccaulerate degree only	20	17.1
Some graduate work	11	9.4
M.A. or M.S.	20	17.1
Ph.D.	4	3.4
Law.	1	.08
Totals	117	100.00

TABLE VI

HOBBIES

CATEGORIES	NUMBER
Art	64
Linguistics	45
Socials	43
Nature	26
Sports	19
Music	16
Service	14
Meditation	3
Dance	1

TABLE VII

REASONS FOR WANTING FELLOWSHIP

RANK	CATEGORY	NUMBER
1	Interest	27
2	To study specific subjects	24
3	To acquire more knowledge	14
4	Use leisure	11
5	Update education	11
6	Return to campus	9
7	Financial gain	8
8	To keep mentally active	7
9	To shape life	4
10	To pursue graduate work	3
11	To earn Masters degree in Library Science	2
12	For love of learning	2
13	To earn diploma	2
14	To be useful	2
15	For professional reason	1
16	To earn extra credit	1
17	To grow old gracefully	1

TABLE VIII

OMNIBUS PERSONALITY INVENTORY SCORES

VARIABLE			DONOVAN	NATIONAL	S.D.
1	Thinking Introversion	TI	35.0	34.8	9.5
2	Theoretical Orientation	TO	16.6	18.8	5.2
3	Estheticism	ES	11.7	11.5	5.0
4	Complexity	CO	8.9	11.7	4.6
5	Antonomy	AU	15.8	22.8	6.8
6	Impulse Expression	IE	17.4	31.8	10.5
7	Schizoid Functioning	SF	25.1	31.3	12.8
8	Social Introversion	SI	22.7	20.7	8.8
9	Relegious Liberalism	RL	8.4	14.6	6.2
10	Masculinity-Feminity	MF	50.6	50.0	10.5
11	Lack of Anxiety	LA	14.5	11.0	4.6
12	Couch-Kenniston	CK	6.8	9.7	3.5

N=46

TABLE IX

LENGTH OF PARTICIPATION BY SEMESTERS

NO. OF SEMESTERS COMPLETED	STUDENTS
1	47
2	19
3	15
4	19
5	7
6	5
7	2
8	0
9	2
10	0
11	2
12	1
13	0
No. Dropping in their first semester	9

N = 128

TABLE X

DISTRIBUTION OF GRADES

GRADES	NUMBER
A	55
B	84
C	42
D	21
E	25
I	5
W (Withdrew)	34
Audit	214

TABLE XI

ENROLLMENT BY DEPARTMENTS

DEPARTMENT	NUMBER	DEPARTMENT	NUMBER
English	82	Hygiene	2
Art	74	Social Work	2
History	57	Zoology	2
Education	53	Accounting	2
Philosophy	25	Slavic	2
Business Administration	22	Russian	2
Home Economics	21	Journalism	2
Library Science	19	Geology	2
Sociology	16	Humanities	2
Physical Education	14	Physics and Astronomy	2
Anthropology	13	Microbiology	2
Music	13	Commerce	2
Political Science	12	Civil Engineering	2
Psychology	11	Classical Languages	2
German	11	Animal Science	1
French	10	Anatomy	1
Chemistry	10	Botany	1
Law	9	Communications	1
Math	9	Economics	1
Speech	7	Computer Science	1
Geography	7	Horticulture	1
Business Education	6	Theatre Arts	1

TABLE XII

PROFESSORS ATTITUDES TOWARD DONOVAN SCHOLA

ATTITUDE	FALL 1966		SPRING 1967		SUMMER 1967		FALL 1967		SUMMER 19	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	
Highly Accepting with comment	4	80	27	83.4	11	73.3	23	79.5	29	8
Accepting no comment	0	0	4	12.5	2	13.3	3	10.35	1	
No opinion	0	0	0	0	1	6.7	1	3.6	1	
Rejection	1	20	1	4.1	1	6.7	2	6.65	4	1
Totals	5	100	32	100	15	100	29	100	35	1
Total number of responses	183									

TABLE XII

PROFESSORS ATTITUDES TOWARD DONOVAN SCHOLARS

1967	SUMMER 1967		FALL 1967		SUMMER 1968		SPRING 1968		FALL 1968	
%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
83.4	11	73.3	23	79.5	29	82.85	20	83.34	34	79.
12.5	2	13.3	3	10.35	1	2.86	2	8.33	3	7.0
0	1	6.7	1	3.6	1	2.86	0	0	4	9.0
4.1	1	6.7	2	6.65	4	11.43	2	8.33	2	5.0
100	15	100	29	100	35	100	24	100	43	100

TABLE XIII

ANECDOTAL EVALUATION

SEX	OCCUPATION	EDUCATION	AGE	ATTITUDE TOWARD
M	Accountant	2 yrs. college	77	I have been greatly benefi pleasure to attend classes It causes one to think you wonderful to receive instr
F	Teacher	3 yrs. college	86	There is a better day for m
M	Geologist	B.S.	73	I appreciate the wonderful professors have been outs
M	Economist/professor	M.A.	73	I feel the program has hel old alike.
F	Governess	Tutor	70	I have added considerable in wide experience.
F	Teacher	M.A.	80	I love the University, the my fellow Donovans.
M	Editor		67	I love them all. . .the Un Donovans.
F	Therapist	M.A.	73	I have kept so busy I hav toward myself and others
F	Personnel	2 yrs. college	73	I don't mind growing old,
F	Teacher	M.A.	67	My feelings toward Dono self, have not changed g
F	Book keeper	1 yr. college	67	The program has helped m

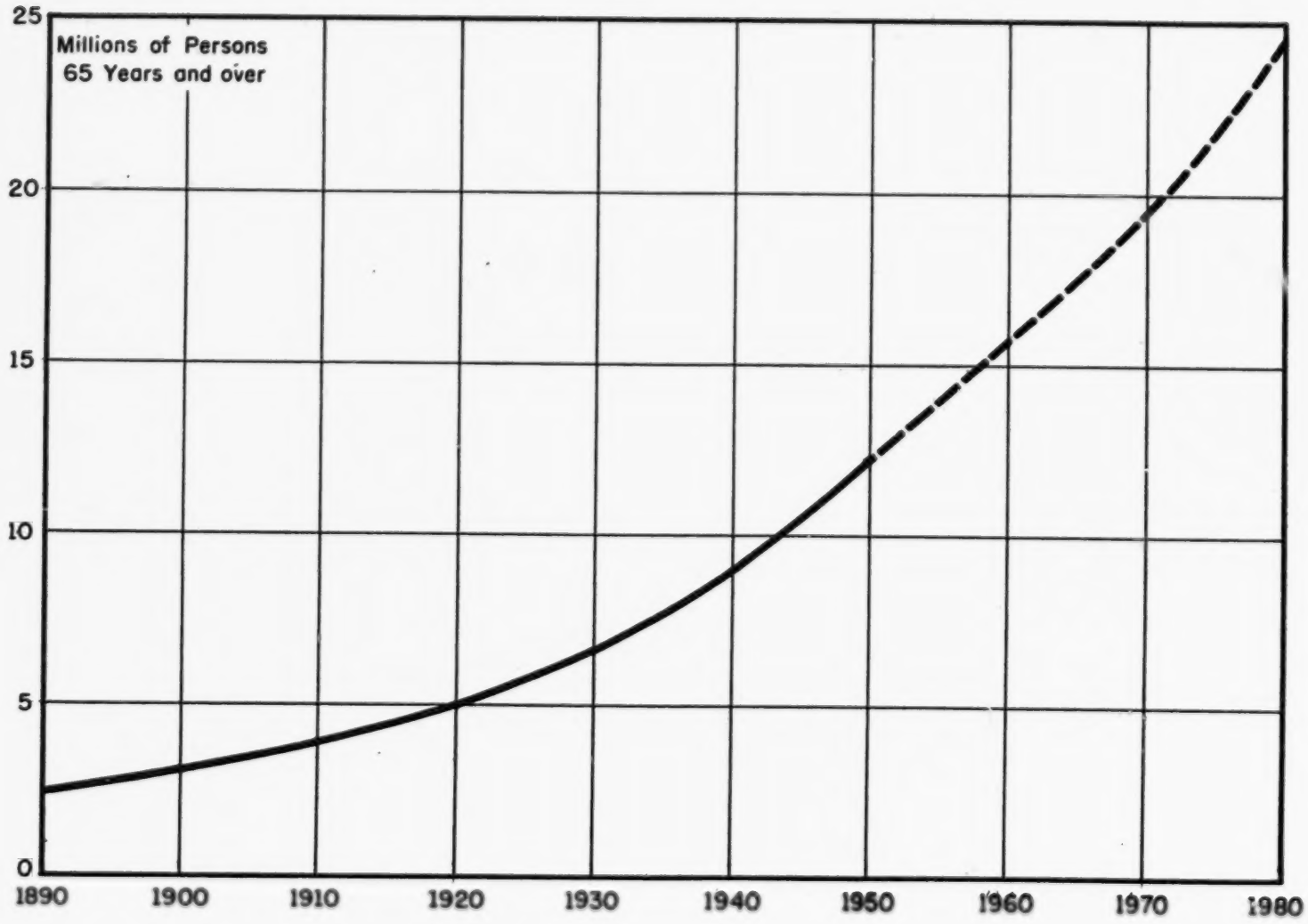
TABLE XIII

ANECDOTAL EVALUATION

N	AGE	ATTITUDE TOWARD THE DONOVAN PROGRAM
lege	77	I have been greatly benefitted by attending class. It was a pleasure to attend classes. Younger students are courteous. It causes one to think young by associating with them. It was wonderful to receive instruction from eminent professors.
lege	86	There is a better day for more abundant living for all humanity.
	73	I appreciate the wonderful offerings of the University and my professors have been outstanding.
	73	I feel the program has helped my association with both young and old alike.
	70	I have added considerable prestige. Other people seem to be lacking in wide experience.
	80	I love the University, the professors are the best and I've enjoyed my fellow Donovans.
	67	I love them all. . .the University, professors, class mates, fellow Donovans.
	73	I have kept so busy I have not had time to think about how I feel toward myself and others. If I am getting old I don't know it.
llege	73	I don't mind growing old, my life is full and rewarding.
	67	My feelings toward Donovans, other people, growing older, myself, have not changed greatly.
ege	67	The program has helped me to learn more.

GRAPH I

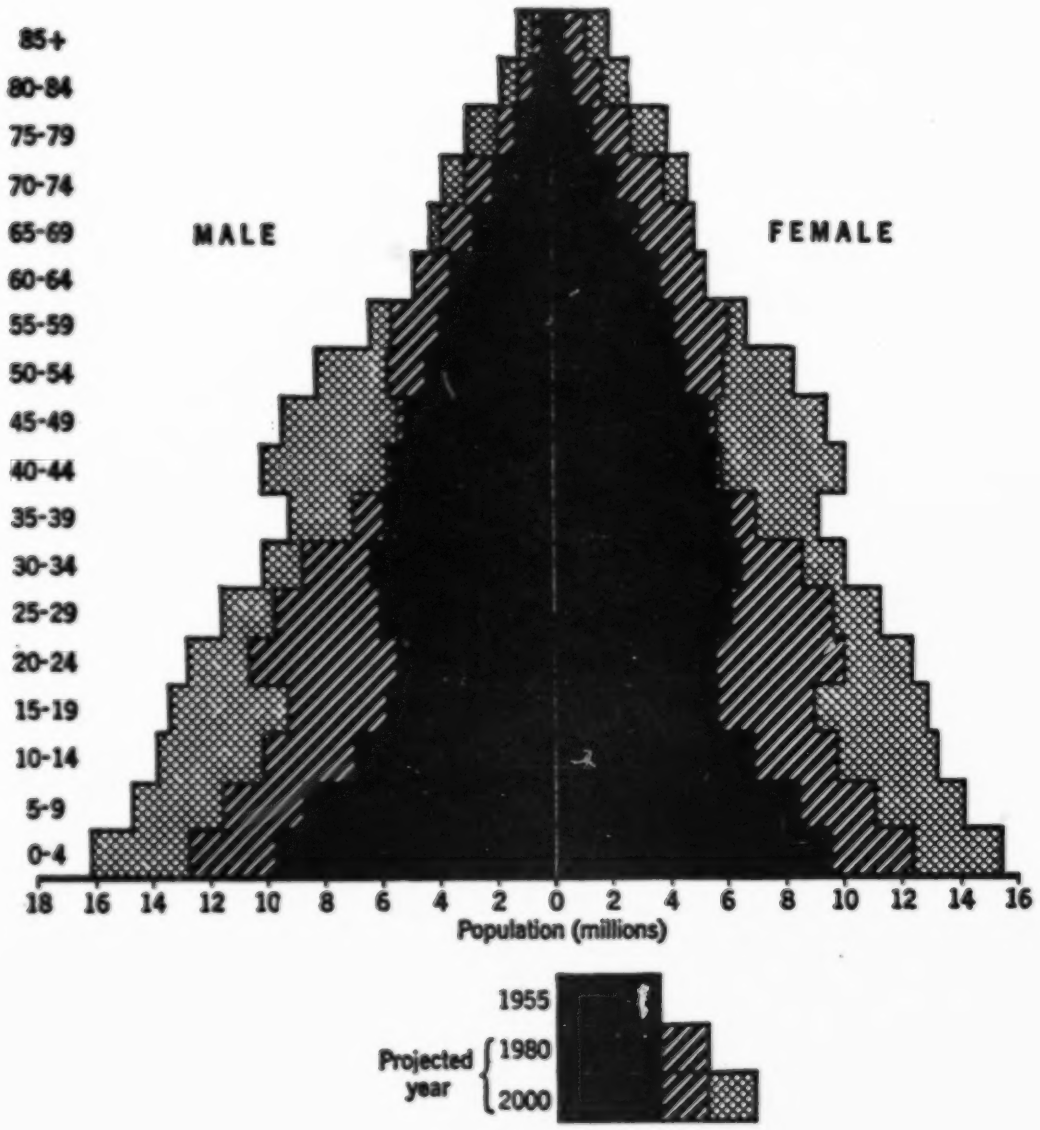
TOTAL POPULATION 65 YEARS AND OVER



Source: Based on U.S. Bureau of the Census data

GRAPH II

AGE PROFILE - USA



Population by age and sex: actual in 1955 and projected (medium series) in 1980 and 2000. The "waist" of the 1955 profile centering in the 20-24-year age group was caused by the low fertility of the 1930 depression years. It moves up to ages 45-49 in the 1980 profile. The "waist" in this profile at ages 15-19 reflects the smaller numbers of births expected during 1960-64.

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